

TRINITY TIDINGS



Living faithfully + Renewing hope + Sharing God's Love

Seasons of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany



*Blessed be the God of Israel who comes to set us free
and raises up new hope for us: a Branch from David's tree.
So have the prophets long declared that with a mighty arm
God would turn back our enemies
and all who wish us harm.*

-Carl P. Daw Jr., ELW Hymn 250 vs. 1

December 2025–January 2026

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If you are reading this newsletter from Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Hasbrouck Heights and are either looking for a church home or you are just interested in finding out more about what goes on at Holy Trinity, we invite you to come and worship with us, to visit our website or to call the church office. We continue to provide a virtual worship opportunity via Zoom for anyone who is unable to attend in person. Pastor Susan can be reached at the office or by email and the information you will need to contact her is in the box below. If you should call the office and get our answering machine, please be assured that your call will be returned at our first available moment. As always, we look forward to welcoming both newcomers and people we haven't seen in a while.



We will be decorating the Sanctuary for the Christmas season immediately following the service on **Sunday, December 21.**

Many hands make light work, so join the fun,
lend a helping hand to make Holy Trinity
as beautiful as ever!

We will “de-green” the Church on **Sunday, January 4**, immediately following the service Celebrating the Epiphany.

Please see **Marge Heeren** for details.

Note from the Financial Secretary

Dear Members,

If you have made purchases on behalf of Holy Trinity and wish to get “in kind” credit rather than be reimbursed, please get your receipts to me before **December 22** so you can get credit on your 2025 giving statement.

Thank you,
Karen Niestemski

COME WORSHIP WITH US

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

**92 Burton Avenue
Hasbrouck Heights, NJ 07604
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htlchhpastor@gmail.com
www.holytrinityhasbrouckheights.com**



10:30 AM - Sunday Service
of Holy Communion

Christmas Eve
5 PM - Candlelight Lessons and Carols

If you would like to join us via Zoom for worship, please email Pastor Susan at htlchhpastor@gmail.com.

The Ministers The People of Holy Trinity
Pastor.....The Rev. Susan Nelson-Colaneri
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CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

You may purchase poinsettias in memory of and/or in honor of loved ones to adorn the Sanctuary for our Christmas service. Please complete the form on the back page of this issue, and place it in the collection plate or return it to the church office before **Sunday, December 14.**

Additional forms are available in the lobby.
If you have any questions, please contact the
church office. Thank you.

Remember the Hungry

Your donations of non-perishable foods, personal care items and gift cards continue to be very much needed and appreciated by those in need. Please see details about our Reverse Advent Calendar on Page 8 for another opportunity to make a difference in feeding the hungry during the season of Advent. Thank you for all that you do.



The Tidings can also be found on our website at . . .

holytrinityhasbrouckheights.com/upcoming-events/serving-schedule/tidings

We welcome your suggestions and comments concerning our newsletter, its format, etc. Please email or call the church office with your comments and suggestions. To view our calendar, go to . . .

holytrinityhasbrouckheights.com/upcoming-events



A Christmas Carol **By G. K. Chesterton**

***The Christ-child lay on Mary's lap,
His hair was like a light.
(O weary, weary were the world,
But here is all aright.)***

***The Christ-child lay on Mary's breast
His hair was like a star.
(O stern and cunning are the kings,
But here the true hearts are.***

***The Christ-child lay on Mary's heart,
His hair was like a fire.
(O weary, weary is the world,
But here the world's desire.)***

***The Christ-child stood on Mary's knee,
His hair was like a crown,
And all the flowers looked up at Him,
And all the stars looked down.***



Though he thought of himself as a “rollicking journalist,” G. K. Chesterton was a prolific and gifted writer in virtually every area of literature. He was a man of strong opinions and enormously talented at defending them, including his religious beliefs. Some see him as the father of the “small is beautiful” movement and a newspaper article by him is credited with provoking Gandhi to seek a “genuine” nationalism for India. He was a gregarious and fun-loving man who also wrestled with despair. But in his Christian faith he found the answers to the dilemmas and paradoxes he saw in life—as we see in this poem he entitled *A Christmas Carol*, written in the aftermath of WWI.

Perhaps you, like me, resonate with the words of his refrain—*O weary, weary is the world, but here the world's desire*. May we, weary though we may be, see the light of Christ and feel his power and warmth to get us through the darkest days and nights. Keep this carol or another of your own choosing and let it sing within you as you prepare to welcome the Christ-child anew.

In the peace and joy of the Lord which is our strength,

Pastor Susan



The Sundays of Advent 2025

Advent is a season of waiting: “Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord” (James 5:7). As we declare good news, let us also encourage one another to slow down, take notice, and wait. Waiting is a long and arduous process. With waiting comes anxiety, anticipation and restlessness. Advent invites us to take a deep, collective breath in the midst of our preparations for Christmas and the coming New Year.



First Sunday of Advent, November 30

Advent Lessons and Carols—O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

with Blessing of Hats and Scarves for PERC

Second Sunday of Advent, December 7

May the righteous flourish; let there be an abundance of peace.

At the heart of our Advent preparation stands John the Baptist, who calls us to repent and make a new beginning. As the darkness increases, we turn toward the approaching light of Christ. We wait with hope for that day when the wolf will lie down with the lamb, and there will be no more hurt or destruction. From the Lord's table we are sent in the spirit of John the Baptist to proclaim that in Christ the Kingdom of God has come near.

Third Sunday of Advent, December 14

My spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

A note of joyful expectation marks today's worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom and Jesus points to the unexpected and transforming signs of God's reign. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us.

Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 21

Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

Today Isaiah prophesies that a young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel. The Gospel is Matthew's account of the annunciation and birth of the one named Emmanuel, God-with-us. On this final Sunday of Advent we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one born to save us from the power of sin and death.



5 pm—Candlelight Lessons and Carols for Christmas Service*

Nativity of our Lord with Holy Eucharist

A candlelight service telling the story of Jesus' birth with sacred words and joyous carols.

*Special music provided by a quartet of professional singers.

Prelude will begin at 4:45 PM.

Meals at the Manger

In this season of gift-giving, your gifts will be lifted up to feed the hungry through food banks in our area. We invite you to leave your donations of non-perishable food items in the designated box in the lobby.



First Sunday of Christmas, December 28

10:30 AM with Holy Eucharist

The birth of Christ does not remove the power of evil from our world, but its light gives hope as walk with all the "holy innocents" of past generations and today who suffer unjustly. In our gathering around word and meal, God continues to redeem us, lift us up, and carry us as in days of old.

Second Sunday of Christmas, January 4, 2026

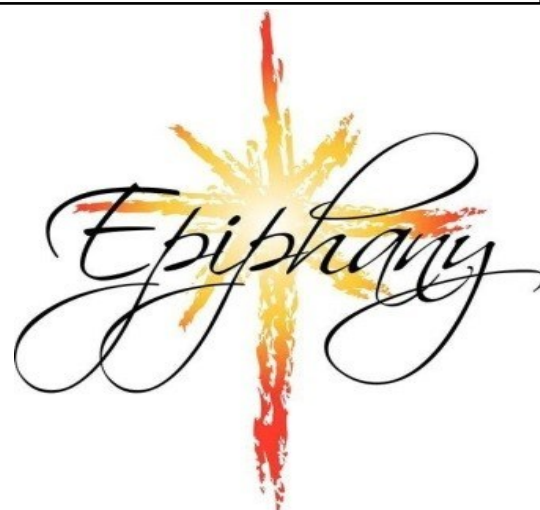
10:30 AM with Holy Eucharist

Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us.



The Season of

The Sundays after Epiphany give us time to unpack the full meaning of the gift we have received at Christmas. What begins in mystery starts to be revealed in signs and wonders until the light reaches every human being. The light does not overwhelm or crush the darkness; it helps us perceive what we could not see before.



The Baptism of Our Lord, January 11

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters.

In the waters of the Jordan, Jesus is revealed as the beloved Son of God. Through this great epiphany, Jesus fulfills all righteousness and becomes the servant of God who will bring forth justice and be a light to the nations. In the waters of Baptism, we too are washed by the Word, anointed by the Spirit, and named God's beloved children. Our baptismal mission is to proclaim good news to all who are oppressed or in need of God's healing.

Second Sunday after Epiphany, January 18

In the Word was life, and the life was the light of all people.

Today's Gospel opens with further reflection on Jesus' Baptism. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world and the one anointed by the Spirit. In the liturgy we come and see Christ revealed among us in word and meal. We go forth to invite others to come and worship the Holy One and to receive the gifts of grace and peace made known among us.

Third Sunday after Epiphany, January 25

The Lord is my light and salvation.

ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE AS PART OF WORSHIP

Jesus begins his public ministry by calling fishers to leave their nets and follow him. In Jesus, the kingdom of God has come near. We who have walked in darkness have seen a great light. We see this light most profoundly in the cross—as God suffers with us and all who are oppressed by sickness, sin, or evil. Light dawns for us as we gather around the Word, the font, and the Holy table. We are then sent to share the good news that others may be “caught” in the net of God's grace and mercy.



***Women in the Shadows:
Nameless Women in the Bible***
Thursdays at 2:30 PM on Zoom
Begins January 8
Concludes on February 12*
(*no class on February 5)



In today's world, recognition is key. Often success is determined by how many people know our name or how popular we are. But it is important to remember that just because a person is nameless, it doesn't mean they aren't valuable. Through the exploration of some of the "nameless women" in the Bible, we are able to see God's joy and purpose for their lives. Together with insightful questions as we enter into the story of these women we will explore the word of God and discover comfort in knowing that God sees all of us even in the shadows.

For more information or to get the Zoom link, contact Pastor Susan at htlchpastor@gmail.com.

**Holy Trinity's sanctuary will be open on Wednesdays
from 10:00 AM to Noon**

Pause and pray and light a candle

Wednesday, December 3

Wednesday, December 10

Wednesday, December 17

In the midst of one of the busiest times of the year, Holy Trinity's sanctuary will be open to give you a quiet breathing space, to be still and catch your breath as you prepare to welcome and celebrate the birth of Christ. Prayers for Advent will be available for you to use for your personal time of prayer and contemplation.

You may linger as long as you like. You may light a candle or two for peace in our hearts, peace in our homes and peace in our world. Please let your friends and neighbors know that they are welcome too.





A



STEWARDSHIP

short . . . A commitment to giving

Behold, behold, I make all things new, beginning with you, and starting from today.
John Bell, Singing in Community Hymn 5

The Stewardship Ministry Team once again invites each of us to keep a Holy Advent by focusing on the fundamentals of stewardship, spiritual growth and preparation for the coming of Christ into our lives. This list is not meant to be another “to do” list in a busy season, but rather a “get to” way of remembering our daily call to prepare a way for the Lord in our lives.

Please join us in preparing the way of the Lord by giving to others.

Please consider substituting a food item with a pair of warm socks.



Reusable bags are available in the lobby.

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

We invite you to leave your donations of non-perishable food items in the designated box in the lobby.

December 1 - box of cereal
December 2 - peanut butter
December 3 - stuffing mix
December 4 - boxed potatoes
December 5 - macaroni and cheese
December 6 - canned fruit
December 7 - canned tomatoes
December 8 - canned tuna
December 9 - dessert mix
December 10 - jar of applesauce
December 11 - canned sweet potatoes
December 12 - cranberry sauce
December 13 - canned beans
December 14 - box of crackers
December 15 - package of rice
December 16 - package of oatmeal
December 17 - package pasta
December 18 - spaghetti sauce
December 19 - chicken noodle soup
December 20 - tomato soup
December 21 - can corn
December 22 - can mixed vegetables
December 23 - can carrots
December 24 - can green beans

Consider replacing an item with warm socks



Don't forget, you can always donate to our mission by going to:

<http://holytrinityhasbrouckheights.com/home/donate>



Grace-Full Dollars Months

Now is a time when we need one another.
Now is a time to live and act as faithful people of God.

December is Center for Hope and Safety Month



The Center for Hope & Safety (formerly Shelter Our Sisters) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit agency in Rochelle Park, New Jersey, founded in 1976. They strongly believe that every person has the right to be safe, empowered, and free from violence and fear. Their mission is to help domestic violence victims in Bergen County, New Jersey, heal and grow through a wide range of services. They give adult and child victims hope and safety, and the tools they need to rebuild their lives beyond domestic violence.

To learn more about the Center for Hope and Safety, please visit: <https://www.hopeandsafetynj.org>

January is

New Jersey Re-Entry Month



New Jersey Reentry Corporation (NJRC) is a non-profit organization that provides critically needed services to persons returning from state prison, county jail, addiction treatment centers, and veterans of the theater of combat.

To learn more about the New Jersey Re-Entry, please visit: <https://njreentry.org/about/>

**In December, please make your check out to
Holy Trinity with “Center for Hope and Safety”
in the memo line of your check.**

**In January, please make your check out to
Holy Trinity with “NJ Re-Entry”
in the memo line of your check.**

**Or go online to our website:
<http://holytrinityhasbrouckheights.com/home/donate>
and designate your gift to “Grace-Full Dollars”**

When you know God’s grace, you want to share God’s grace.



STITCH ONE, SHARE ONE

The Stitch One, Share One group at Holy Trinity will be meeting on the fourth Sunday of every month. We welcome everyone and invite members of the community as well.

As winter approaches, Stitch One, Share One will once again be donating handmade hats and scarves to the PERC shelter in Union City. This is just one of the projects that Holy Trinity sponsors for the homeless.



A huge thank to all the knitters and crocheters of WELCA and Stitch One, Share One and to Gisela Graf and Pastor Susan for the many beautiful handcrafted hats, scarves, and blankets that will bring a tangible gift of God's love and ours to the residents of PERC.

READERS

The weather has turned cool and it's the perfect time to snuggle up with a good book.



The Readers of Holy Trinity will meet on **December 5 at 3:30 PM** in the multi-purpose room to discuss the book, *The Ghost Writer*, by Julie Clark.

Amazon Books describes it as a compelling story, featuring plenty of twists and turns that keep the reader guessing until the end. All are welcome. Please join us for an afternoon of what will be a lively discussion.



BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING

Thank you to everyone who so generously contributed items for WELCA's Christmas at Sea project.

Combining your donations with a grant from Thrivent, WELCA was able to assemble 24 gift bags for Seafarer's International for their program. Together with the 18 satchels from St. John's in Rutherford and Holy Trinity's 24, we sent off 42 bundles of Christmas cheer to Seafarers International.



A huge thank you to all who donated items for the Christmas at Sea Satchels.

Thank you

We would like to thank our Holy Trinity family for the prayers, cards, and visits. It has been a long time, but Charlie is returning home right before Thanksgiving, and we are extremely thankful for that.

We continue to need prayers for good health and continued improvement for mobility. We have a long road ahead.

May the Peace of our Lord be with all of you, Charlie and Karen Niestemski





Happy Birthday!



December-January

Mary Lee Smith
Emily Gaige
Sara Kuzmenka
Joseph Colaneri
Katie De Cicco
Josephine Shelley
Matthew Martinez
James Varga
Helen Nixon
Sara LaSpisa
Nicholas Obiso
Ray Lindberg

December-January Anniversaries



Anthony & Melissa Gugliotti



Thank You!

To all who shared snacks to be included in the college student exam survival bags for our college students.

To all who generously donated to the Christmas at Sea program for Seafarer's International.

To Bert Heeren for helping to transport the Center for Food Action donations.

To all who continue to graciously volunteer their time and talents to make Holy Trinity a wonderful place to worship!

Thank you

Dear Holy Trinity family,

Words really can't express how thankful my family is for the kindness shown to us during my husband David's long battle with cancer and recent death.

From prayers to meals, to hugs and shoulder squeezes, and millions of car rides, your love and Faith sustained us and for that we will forever be grateful.

Yours in Christ,
Dianna Mammone
Ben Mammone
Sara Mammone and family



Heights Friendly Neighbors Kick Off Annual Fund Drive

The members of the Friendly Neighbors will officially begin their annual campaign on Thanksgiving Day, November 27, 2025. It will continue through New Year's Day. This charitable organization has been serving the residents of Hasbrouck Heights for 86 years, beginning their service to the community during the great depression. They work to maintain the anonymity of their clients in order to serve them with dignity.

We received the following letter from one of our long time donors during our campaign and we have decided to share a portion of that letter with you. "I admit that when I saw the story in The Gazette I did briefly (and selfishly) think. "It's been a tough year financially. Can I afford this?" Then I quickly realized that if I was having a less than stellar year, imagine what a hard time those families you support in HH are having! So here's my annual gift for those less fortunate than me."

This person no longer lives in the state, but out west. We too, must remember the families we support with children and disabled adult children they care for. If you are able to share with another family to make their lives a little better, please make your check to Friendly Neighbors and mail it to 133 Boulevard, Hasbrouck Heights, NJ 07604.



CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

You may purchase poinsettias in memory of and/or in honor of loved ones to adorn the Sanctuary for our Christmas service. Please complete the form below and place it in the collection plate or return it to the church office before Sunday, December 14.

Please print clearly

Given in Memory of: _____

By: _____

Given in Memory of: _____

By: _____

Given in Memory of: _____

By: _____

Given in Honor of: _____

By: _____

Given in Honor of: _____

By: _____

Given in Memory of: _____

By: _____

Quantity _____ x \$20 = Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____